

**Summer School 2017**

Social Justice: A Normative  
Foundation for Social Work?

BA Social Work  
MA Social Work with a special  
emphasis on Social Innovation

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# Introduction

## **Social Justice: A Normative Foundation for Social Work?**

Social justice is often proposed as an important value of social work. For the International Federation of Social Work, social justice is, along with human rights, collective responsibility and respect for diversity, a core ethical principle of social work. Therefore, social workers “have a responsibility to promote social justice, in relation to society generally, and in relation to the people with whom they work.” However, although social justice is proclaimed as such a core value, social workers have found it a slippery concept to define. Contemporary efforts to trace the roots of social justice-oriented social work focus on the settlement house movement. Current social work literature on social justice often focuses on the concepts of oppression, fairness and justice, the capability approach, recognition, human rights and the like. More systematically, however, social justice can be described in libertarian, utilitarian, contractual, egalitarian, and communitarian ways, being a fairly new paradigm of modern societies. Whereas the general idea of justice has a long tradition, the idea of social justice is developing in an era in which the notion of the universal equality of human beings is fundamental. With the French Revolution of 1789, which postulated freedom, equality and fraternity as core principles of modern societies, the idea of social justice became a key normative concept. The French Revolution brought about fundamental social and political change, as it transformed the social fact of poverty from a god-given fate into a human-made phenomenon. This meant that such conditions can also be changed by human action. The social sphere became a sphere of social and political action, and the notion of social justice a normative guide and measure of social relations. Yet, it is difficult to define what social justice means for social work, and to decide how it should be promoted in its different fields, including youth, family, employment, health, migration and diversity. Hence, in social work theory and professional practice it has been argued that a normative perspective is not needed for professional social work and that indeed, given its strong-

ly normative character, such an orientation endangers professional social work action. This debate about social justice is very heated, not only in national disciplinary theory and practices, but also in international discourse. The summer school aims to identify the social justice discourses that prevail in different national contexts, and the current political and social problems that fuel current debates about social justice in social work.

## **Core Questions**

- What is social justice and how is it discussed in different national and international contexts?
- What relevance has social justice for social work?
- What challenges can be identified for social work in relation to social justice?

International participants of Summer School 2017 will debate different views of social justice, and develop a broad perspective on social justice and social work through focusing on its relevance in the different fields of social work, including generational justice, family justice, cultural justice, and distributive justice.

## **Further Information**

[web.fhnw.ch/plattformen/hsa-summer-school](http://web.fhnw.ch/plattformen/hsa-summer-school)

# Programme

Day	Tuesday, 6 June 2017	Wednesday, 7 June 2017
Time		
09.00 – 10.30	<b>Welcome and Introduction</b> Thomas Geisen/Andreas Schauder  <b>Lecture 1</b> HS120, Kollegienhaus <b>Pat Cox</b> (Re)-making “connectivities” ...	<b>Lecture 2</b> HS120, Kollegienhaus <b>Roger Green</b> Challenging the rich and the powerful ...
10.30 – 11.00	<b>Break</b>	<b>Break</b>
11.00 – 12.30	<b>World Café</b> Entrance Hall, Kollegienhaus	<b>Workshop 4</b> S103, Kollegienhaus <b>Faezeh Manteghi</b> A comparative study of the place of social justice ...  <b>Workshop 5</b> S104, Kollegienhaus <b>Didier Reynaert</b> “Street-level social justice” ...  <b>Workshop 6</b> S105, Kollegienhaus <b>Nabeela Talib</b> Asylum seekers in immigration detention ...
12.30 – 13.30	<b>Lunch</b>	<b>Lunch</b>
13.30 – 15.00	<b>Workshop 1</b> S103, Kollegienhaus <b>Michael Asiedu</b> Towards a holistic social justice post-conflict ...  <b>Workshop 2</b> S104, Kollegienhaus <b>James I. Martin</b> Human rights and social justice ...  <b>Workshop 3</b> S105, Kollegienhaus <b>Andreas Schauder</b> Social justice in global perspective ...	<b>Workshop 7</b> S103, Kollegienhaus <b>Babak Baseri and Iman Gholan Nejad</b> The concept of social justice ...  <b>Workshop 8</b> S104, Kollegienhaus <b>Thomas Geisen</b> Multiculturalism and social justice ...  <b>Workshop 9</b> S105, Kollegienhaus <b>Jyrki Konkka</b> Well-being, equality, and social justice ...
15.00 – 15.30	<b>Break</b>	<b>Break</b>
15.30 – 17.00	<b>Student Working Session</b>	<b>Student Working Session</b>
17.00 – 19.00		

Day	Thursday, 8 June 2017	Friday, 9 June 2017
Time		
09.00 – 10.30	<b>Lecture 3</b> HS120, Kollegienhaus <b>Katrin Toens</b> What might theories of justice tell us ...	<b>Lecture 4</b> HS120, Kollegienhaus <b>Mel Gray</b> Social justice feminism
10.30 – 11.00	<b>Break</b>	<b>Break</b>
11.00 – 12.30	<b>Workshop 10</b> S103, Kollegienhaus <b>Nina Thieme</b> A systematic study of social justice ...  <b>Workshop 11</b> S104, Kollegienhaus <b>Katrin Toens</b> see lecture 3  <b>Workshop 12</b> S105, Kollegienhaus <b>Roger Green</b> see lecture 2	<b>Poster Session</b>  <b>Closing Session</b>
12.30 – 13.30	<b>Lunch</b>	<b>Closing Coffee</b>
13.30 – 15.00	<b>Student Working Session</b>	
15.00 – 15.30	<b>Guided Tours</b>  <b>GT1:</b> Hans Schäppi: Transnational Companies and Social Justice: Syngenta  <b>GT2:</b> Andreas Schauder: Social Work Tour Basel	– HS: Hörsaal (Lecturing Hall) – S: Seminarraum (Seminar Room) – There may be additional lectures defined in a workshop slot, and lectures in parallel. – There may be up to 3–4 parallel workshops in a slot.
15.30 – 17.00		
17.00 – 19.00	<b>Apéro</b>	

# Lectures

## Lecture 1

### **(Re)-making “connectivities”: Revealing and acknowledging injustices to develop broader perspectives on social justice and social work**

#### **Pat Cox**

Amid the ongoing national and international debates among social work practitioners, students and academics about social justice, often the simplest thing for many of us in social work is to focus on issues within in our own particular professional field of practice or academic discipline. To develop broad – or broader – perspectives on social justice and social work seems complicated, frequently leading to questions of definition and of meaning, and to consideration of wider, often hidden, social injustice. Starting by exploring the polyvalent nature of the concept, this presentation will provide examples of some hidden social injustices, arguing that Morgan’s (1989) concept of “connectivity” is useful in analysing harmful social practices, although more limited when it comes to disentangling corporate, institutional and personal responsibilities and deciding upon action. This will be followed by reflections on the development and dissemination of some of the ideas, discourses and praxes of radical social work in England in the 1970s. The author acknowledges cross-fertilization and “connectivities” with similar initiatives in the fields of health and mental health. During these years, many social work and other professionals were actively involved in a range of campaigns focused on shared professional practice issues, underpinned by shared values of more transparent and supportive work with users of social work services, and a commitment to improved understanding of accepted norms through sociological and political theorising. If social justice is to remain a worthwhile endeavour for social work, is it possible to rethink and reclaim the human rights at its core, rather than accept the current normative sense of social justice as “a good thing” with which it is almost impossible to disagree?

#### **Core questions**

- Is it possible to reframe/reclaim social justice so that it is more relevant to social work?
- What challenges might be met in doing so?

## Lecture 2

### **Challenging the rich and the powerful: Fighting for social justice at the community level: Developing strategies for practice**

#### **Roger Green**

The IFSW Europe Charter of Rights states that social workers should fight for the rights of individuals and groups who are marginalised and challenge injustice, whilst the UK British Association of Social Workers’ code of ethics says that social workers have a responsibility to promote social justice across society generally, and among the people they work with. However, social justice now inhabits a world in which we see Western Europe moving steadily to the political right and the threat of the end of liberal democracies. This paper argues that this political context challenges our understanding and definition of social justice and what it means in practice for social workers and all other people working with individuals, families, groups and communities experiencing social and economic hardship. It highlights an example of collaboration between the university and the community, in which activists, local residents, teachers, carers, service users, social workers, academics, students, and other workers are acting together to bring about social justice, by challenging the development of a large area of derelict land alongside the River Thames in Deptford, south-east London. This collaboration – called the “Voice4Deptford” – is insisting that the voices and demands of the local community be heard, and that the development benefit the local community. It is a social justice approach that brings people together, highlights inequalities in the democratic processes and makes demands on the powerful on behalf of the people. It is an approach that supports the aims and objectives of the UK’s radical Social Work Action Network by promoting “a model of social work practice which is rooted in the value of social justice, which seeks to advocate alongside, and on behalf of, carers and service users and which values both individual relationship-based practice and also collective approaches”. [www.socialworkfuture.org](http://www.socialworkfuture.org)

#### **Core questions**

- How do we redefine a model of social justice in a changing world?
- Do social justice strategies for practice at the local community level achieve results?

## Lecture 3

### **What (if anything) might theories of justice tell us about the role of social work in the current refugee crisis?**

#### **Katrin Toens**

The presentation questions different theoretical approaches to justice, and in particular social justice, and the role of social workers in the current refugee crisis. It starts from the following observation: social justice is a key concept in the ethics of social work, yet, most theories of justice do not explicitly address social workers or their contribution to a just society. Social work is often in the blind spot of justice theories. This seems problematic for the following reasons. First, social work might need a more systematic understanding of concepts of social justice and how they do or do not meet the expectation of normative guidance. Second, theories of justice would profit from social work and its empirical knowledge of social problems and social change. Thus, both sides could overcome certain limitations by entering into dialogue. Using the current refugee crisis as an empirical point of reference, I will provide examples to support these arguments. The conclusion is that the science of social work, with its focus on human rights, contingency and “real-world” orientation can help to solve some of the implicit contradictions and tensions that most theories of justice suffer from when they try to address issues of migration and refugee movements (e.g. methodological nationalism, unresolved tension between citizenship and human rights, institutional stability and social change). In bringing the science of social work into dialogue with selected approaches to social justice (proceduralism, hermeneutics, discourse ethics) it becomes evident that concepts of social justice need to be modified if they are to serve the profession of social work more concretely.

#### **Core questions**

- How can social workers address the current refugee crisis from a social justice perspective?
- How might the science of social work contribute to a better understanding of the potential and limits of theories of social justice in the context of the refugee crisis?

## Lecture 4

### **Social justice feminism**

#### **Mel Gray**

In this workshop, we will examine the enduring relevance of social justice feminism in an era in which there is a common misconception that the goals of gender parity have been recognised and mainstreamed. We will examine the central tenets of social justice feminism and its focus on matters affecting women, such as paid work, unpaid care work in the home, culture and identity, sexuality, domestic violence, and state welfare. We will use Nancy Fraser’s (2009) theory of social justice since it acknowledges the complexity of justice within contemporary welfare. Her work has extended the theory of social justice feminism. We will examine its key features and their implications for the service-user movement as a site for direct and critical engagement with the neoliberal reprivatisation discourse.

#### **Core questions**

- What is social justice feminism?
- How does Nancy Fraser’s theory of social justice advance the goals of social justice feminism?

# Workshops

## Workshop 1

### **Towards a holistic social justice post-conflict: An economic justice perspective in transitional justice**

#### **Michael Asiedu**

Transitional justice refers to the set of judicial and non-judicial measures implemented in various countries to redress the legacies of massive human rights abuses. They include criminal prosecutions, truth commissions, reparations programs, and a variety of institutional reforms. Essentially, the aim of transitional justice is to provide social justice a step towards normalization for new democratic regimes, usually following conflict or periods of authoritarian rule. It seeks to establish mechanisms to ensure that the new society is ready for its democratic path. Whilst it normally includes most of the measures listed above, a critical gap has emerged, which is the exclusion of economic violence or crimes. Transitional justice has been overly concerned with civil and political crimes, though addressing only civil and political crimes does not necessarily culminate in comprehensive social justice for victims and society. Should social work be involved and if so, how? My thoughts about these questions have evolved to include social work at an early post-conflict stage if comprehensive social justice is to be achieved. The presentation will focus primarily on the situations in South Africa, Liberia and Sierra Leone.

#### **Core questions**

- What is social justice and how is it discussed in different national and international contexts?
- How should post-conflict social justice, including distributive justice, be pursued taking into consideration the roles of economic crimes and of social work?

## Workshop 2

### **Human rights and social justice among sexual and gender minorities**

#### **James I. Martin**

This workshop will examine how human rights and social justice have been denied to sexual and gender minority (LGBTQ) people, and the role the social work profession plays in expanding social justice for these populations. As a starting point, the workshop will locate oppression against sexual and gender minorities both historically, and spatially, around the world. In particular, same-sex sexual behavior was strongly proscribed by Western religions beginning around the 13<sup>th</sup> century, and religion then formed the basis for oppression by the state through sodomy laws and the rigid application of gender norms. Oppression through criminal law spread from Europe to the rest of the world through the colonial empires of Britain, Spain, Portugal and the Netherlands. Finally, psychiatry and the mental health professions became the primary source of oppression in the West, as enforcement of sodomy laws gradually waned. Next, the workshop will examine the forms of oppression used against sexual and gender minorities throughout the world today. Primarily, these are violence, discriminatory laws, and discriminatory practices. However, this oppression impacts sexual and gender minorities unequally, depending on country and region, religion, race and ethnicity, and social class. Finally, the workshop will consider the role of social work as collaborator in the oppression of sexual and gender minorities, and also as advocate for the expansion of social justice to these populations, and will outline the ways in which social work could advocate more proactively.

#### **Core questions**

- In what ways have human rights and social justice been denied to sexual and gender minorities throughout the world?
- How should social work contribute to expanding social justice for sexual and gender minorities?

### Workshop 3

#### **Social justice in global perspective: Challenges and developments**

##### **Andreas Schauder**

The concept of social justice has international and global dimensions. The United Nations states that social justice, broadly speaking, is the fair and compassionate distribution of the fruits of economic growth. Social movements, NGO projects and state activities underline the significance of global social justice based on human rights, equality and well-being. As inequities are present in national contexts, so are they globally present in human societies. Is this the result of “a period of two or three decades of an unquestioned market faith” (Sandel)? Have we thought less about the problematic consequences of traditional terms of trade for many poor groups or nations? The wealth of so-called developed countries corresponds with a lack of social justice in poor countries. The UN has formulated 17 Sustainable Development Goals, underpinning a supremely ambitious and transformational vision: “We envisage a world free of poverty, hunger, disease and want, a world where all life can thrive. A world with universal literacy. A world with equitable and universal access to quality education at all levels, to health care and social protection, where physical, mental and social well-being are assured.”

##### **Core questions**

- What indicators describe social justice, what causes global social injustice?
- What aspects of social justice should be thought about in light of the UN Sustainable Development Goals and what are the tasks for Social Work therein?

### Workshop 4

#### **A comparative study of the place of social justice in the constitutions of Muslim-majority countries**

##### **Faezeh Manteghi**

One of the key challenges in studying legal systems of Muslim-majority countries is their perspective on social justice; how is social justice related to concepts that have emerged from the traditions and transformations of law in the West, and that lie beyond the realm of the Islamic legal system? In most Muslim countries that have faced political change in recent years, one of the critical issues raised by modern state theories is integrating social justice into new legislation. Not only has this conflict not yet been resolved, but also the inability of the existing theories to resolve the controversies is becoming more and more evident. The possibility or impossibility of the coexistence of social justice and Sharia can be very stark in constitutions, illustrating the success or otherwise of efforts to integrate the two. The constitutions of most Muslim-majority countries, including Iran, Egypt, Sudan, Iraq, Afghanistan and Pakistan, have developed in the context of modern state-building processes based on diverse constitutional drafting agenda. The place of social justice in these constitutions should be understood as the product of relationships among religion, politics and culture. Focusing on the recent legal developments in Muslim-majority countries, the paper explores the question of constitutional mechanisms concerning social justice and their impact on other legislation in these societies. From a constitutional perspective, this research studies the challenges that social justice create for legislatures and other law-making bodies.

##### **Core questions**

- How do the constitutions of Muslim-majority countries recognize and seek to realize the various components of social justice?
- How can social justice be discussed and defined in Muslim-majority countries from a constitutional perspective?



## Workshop 5

### **“Street-level social justice”: A normative approach for constructive social work**

#### **Didier Reynaert**

According to the international definition of social work, social justice is a fundamental frame of reference for social work. Some even argue that social work is pre-eminently a “social justice profession”. The development of a social justice approach in social work is generally considered a step forward for social work practice in dealing with social problems, aiming at realizing human dignity for service users. Nevertheless, this positive evaluation of social justice approaches in social work can be challenged on several grounds: Who defines for instance what is just or fair? Is a paternalistic practice of social work making claims “from above” de facto contrary to a social justice approach? How can a social justice approach guide solutions for conflicting or competing claims and interests? In this presentation, we enter the debate on social justice and social work. We take the perspective of “constructive social work”, recognizing that social work practice is shaped by the narratives and actions of social workers and service-users in a particular context or society. What is often missing from this debate is the question of how social work defines social justice in its day-to-day practice. And do these constructions contribute to respect for social justice? Stating that notions and ideas of social justice in social work are constructed implies that a plurality of notions of social justice can exist, depending, for instance, on the socio-economic, cultural or political context. Different notions of social justice can have different effects on service-users. In fact, we have little evidence of how social justice acts in social work policy or practice. We will argue for a “street-level social justice”-perspective, in which social justice is considered an individual and collective learning process for social work.

#### **Core questions**

- How can we understand the notion of street-level social justice in social work?
- How can “street-level social justice” be a relevant framework for social work?

## Workshop 6

### **Asylum seekers in immigration detention: Opportunities and implications for social work – UK**

#### **Nabeela Talib**

In the field of social work, institutions of welfare provision sometimes create the problems that clients face. Immigration detention centres are a case in point. Studies have shown the severe impact that detention can have on the mental health of asylum seekers, and the inadequate services and support in UK detention centres. Neither immigration detention nor adult asylum seekers are in the general remit of social workers, but there are opportunities for intervention in the area (e.g. risk assessments, talking therapies, and preparation for release). In this presentation, the impact of the UK’s austerity and immigration policies are explored in relation to the ways in which asylum seekers are marginalised by the welfare state and therefore also side-lined by the social work profession. The conclusion is that social workers must be more critical of their professional field, adhere to the profession’s values of social justice and equality and seek to attend to the groups of people that fall through the cracks of the welfare system.

#### **Core questions**

- What opportunities for social work intervention within the area of immigration detention can be identified?
- What needs to be done by social workers to better attend to the groups of people who lack professional social work support?

## Workshop 7

### The concept of social justice

#### Babak Baseri and Iman Gholan Nejad

Social justice is important to the evolution of international relationships. With the invention of the nation-state came a new interpretation of social justice. The social contract is the basis for social justice in democratic societies and was necessary to the development of a more comprehensive theory of social justice, including a clear and detailed definition of the public interest, and for the distinction between common and private goods. This led ultimately to a system of administrative decision making. Recognizing social justice as a concrete phenomenon led to the conception of a legal system based on internal and external laws. In fact, the importance of this issue can be seen in how laws have evolved, especially public law. Concepts of social justice are shaped according to common social values, which are expressed and combined in legal concepts. The dialectic relationship between universal values and cultural diversity, which leads to the re-creation of cultural and values-based pluralism requires greater tolerance from those who want social rights to be global. If we could guarantee the rights of minorities and increase the prominence of less-developed countries in administrative decision-making around the world, then we could further improve and develop the concept of social justice. In the course of a comprehensive agreement on the principles of social justice that underpins the foundations of social work, we should not focus primarily on a plurality of social values.

#### Core questions

- What concept of justice structures social justice?
- What principles can be identified and extracted from the notion of social justice?

## Workshop 8

### Multiculturalism and social justice: New challenges for social work?

#### Thomas Geisen

Discussions about multiculturalism focus on the difficulties in modern societies of dealing with the needs of different ethnic, cultural or religious groups if their norms and values conflict with those of the majority in the society. This can include manifest social conflicts: Should Muslim teachers be allowed to teach in public schools wearing a head scarf; should Sikhs be allowed to wear their turban instead of a helmet at work; should the traditional hunting of protected animals should be allowed for Inuit but prohibited for others? Conflicting minority rights and the claim for recognition also creates new challenges for social work: What can be done by social work professionals if the family demand to adhere to traditional norms and values conflicts with educational and cultural practices in institutions of social work? Such conflicts are often discussed as conflicts between universal, Western values, deeply rooted in a liberalism based on individual rights and plurality, in which cultural practices and religious beliefs are tolerated as long as they remain in the private realm, and particular, non-Western values based on strong traditions and religious beliefs resulting from a firm ethnocentric position, and deeply attached to special rights for social groups. Ernest Jouhy (1996) argues that Western universalism itself must be understood as a particular, ethnocentric position which does not constitute a resolution of the dilemma of universalism and particularism. The question of social justice is at the centre of this debate, which deals with the question of what particular rights can be granted to a specific cultural, ethnic or religious group without eroding the political foundations of the liberal Western state. Multiculturalism is often perceived as the solution to such conflicts.

#### Core questions

- What challenges for social justice can be identified in multicultural societies?
- What challenges does social justice create for social work in multicultural societies?

## Workshop 9

### Well-being, equality, and social justice

#### Jyrki Konkka

Well-being and equality are key values of modern societies. Since social work as an institution aims at promoting and protecting the well-being of citizens and diminishing inequality among them, we can safely say that social work at its basic level requires a normative perspective. That is, it is value-based through and through. Its justification rests on the core values of our society. Furthermore, these key values are stated in laws regulating social work (e.g. in Finland). However, well-being and equality seem to pull in different directions. Welfarism says that well-being is the most important value of our society, and indeed, the policy recommendations of the EU and OECD are highly welfarist. On the other hand, egalitarianism holds that equality is the most important value, and that diminishing inequality, disadvantages and poverty are the most important objectives of governments. The choice of emphasis, and the question whether these two currents can be combined, is a value question. In this paper, I assume a combined view of “equal opportunity to welfare”, embraced by Gerald Cohen and others. I assume that as a subject-dependent (or, subject-relative) value, claims for more equal distribution of well-being (or, at least, more equal opportunity to pursuit well-being) are justified in modern societies. After all, promoting and protecting well-being is a key element of legitimacy of democratic governments.

#### Core questions

- What is the value base of social work?
- Well-being as the core value of modern society

## Workshop 10

### A systematic study of social justice and its relationship to theoretical models of justice

#### Nina Thieme

During the last two decades, welfare states have radically changed. In the light of modified economic and social conditions, including globalization, demographic change and the rise of a knowledge society, the traditional welfare state has become a social investment state. Instead of concentrating on redistribution and transferring “risk” from the individual to the state, the new post-welfarist model generates an active society. This development includes (new) forms of self-instrumentalisation and responsibility. Along with these fundamental changes to welfare regimes, social, political and intellectual certainties, especially about social justice, have been profoundly unsettled. For social work, this loss of certainty inevitably raises the question of its professional identity. In the German context, we currently (again) argue for social justice as a normative foundation for our work. We even discuss social work as a profession of social justice. In this context, the main theoretical model is the capability/capabilities approach. Because until now we have had no systematic study of the term social justice and its relationship to different theoretical models of justice.

#### Core questions

- What are the definitions of the terms social and justice, and how do the meanings of each relate to one another?
- Which definitions of the term social justice fit theoretically with a distributive, capability or recognition model of justice (and why)?

## Workshop 11

### **What (if anything) might theories of justice tell us about the role of social work in the current refugee crisis?**

#### **Katrin Toens**

The presentation questions different theoretical approaches to justice, and in particular social justice, and the role of social workers in the current refugee crisis. It starts from the following observation: social justice is a key concept in the ethics of social work, yet, most theories of justice do not explicitly address social workers or their contribution to a just society. Social work is often in the blind spot of justice theories. This seems problematic for the following reasons. First, social work might need a more systematic understanding of concepts of social justice and how they do or do not meet the expectation of normative guidance. Second, theories of justice would profit from social work and its empirical knowledge of social problems and social change. Thus, both sides could overcome certain limitations by entering into dialogue. Using the current refugee crisis as an empirical point of reference, I will provide examples to support these arguments. The conclusion is that the science of social work, with its focus on human rights, contingency and “real-world” orientation can help to solve some of the implicit contradictions and tensions that most theories of justice suffer from when they try to address issues of migration and refugee movements (e.g. methodological nationalism, unresolved tension between citizenship and human rights, institutional stability and social change). In bringing the science of social work into dialogue with selected approaches to social justice (proceduralism, hermeneutics, discourse ethics) it becomes evident that concepts of social justice need to be modified if they are to serve the profession of social work more concretely.

#### **Core questions**

- How can social workers address the current refugee crisis from a social justice perspective?
- How might the science of social work contribute to a better understanding of the potential and limits of theories of social justice in the context of the refugee crisis?

## Workshop 12

### **Challenging the rich and the powerful: Fighting for social justice at the community level: Developing strategies for practice**

#### **Roger Green**

The IFSW Europe Charter of Rights states that social workers should fight for the rights of individuals and groups who are marginalised and challenge injustice, whilst the UK British Association of Social Workers’ code of ethics says that social workers have a responsibility to promote social justice across society generally, and among the people they work with. However, social justice now inhabits a world in which we see Western Europe moving steadily to the political right and the threat of the end of liberal democracies. This paper argues that this political context challenges our understanding and definition of social justice and what it means in practice for social workers and all other people working with individuals, families, groups and communities experiencing social and economic hardship. It highlights an example of collaboration between the university and the community, in which activists, local residents, teachers, carers, service users, social workers, academics, students, and other workers are acting together to bring about social justice, by challenging the development of a large area of derelict land alongside the River Thames in Deptford, south-east London. This collaboration – called the “Voice4Deptford” – is insisting that the voices and demands of the local community be heard, and that the development benefit the local community. It is a social justice approach that brings people together, highlights inequalities in the democratic processes and makes demands on the powerful on behalf of the people. It is an approach that supports the aims and objectives of the UK’s radical Social Work Action Network by promoting “a model of social work practice which is rooted in the value of social justice, which seeks to advocate alongside, and on behalf of, carers and service users and which values both individual relationship-based practice and also collective approaches”. [www.socialworkfuture.org](http://www.socialworkfuture.org)

#### **Core questions**

- How do we redefine a model of social justice in a changing world?
- Do social justice strategies for practice at the local community level achieve results?

## Speakers

### **Michael Asiedu**

Researcher with the Global Political Trends Center Istanbul, Kultur University, Turkey. He holds an LLM in International Human Rights Law with a focus on transitional justice from the University of Liverpool, UK and a Bachelors in Political Studies with Sociology and Social Work as minor from the Kwame Nkrumah University of Science and Technology, Ghana. He is about to start his doctorate at Lingnan University in Hong Kong where the main focus of his thesis is post-conflict social justice. He recently had a paper published by the University of Oxford Transitional Justice Research partnership with Justiceinfo.net titled "The Libyan Political Agreement – Options for its Sustainability".

### **Babak Baseri**

Assistant professor at the Islamic University in Fars, Iran. He has a PhD in public law and has been teaching constitutional and administrative courses since 2014. His recent research is about theories of justice; his academic interest in is concepts of social and administrative justice.

**Iman Gholam Nejad** is assistant professor in public law at the Islamic University in Fars, Iran. He has been teaching in jurisprudence and economic law.

### **Pat Cox**

Reader in Social Work and Social Justice, School of Social Work, Care and Community, University of Central Lancashire UK. Prior to becoming an academic, she worked in child protection social work. Her research focuses on children, young people and families and their experiences of migration and mobility, and in child protection systems. She has extensive international and national peer-reviewed publications and has been invited to make many conference presentations in these areas.

### **Dr. Thomas Geisen**

Professor for Workplace Integration and Disability Management. His fields of interest are work and migration, in which he is widely published. Recent publications include: "Migration, Minderheiten und Demokratie" (2016, edited with Philipp Eigenmann and Tobias Studer); "Migration, Stadt und Urbanität" (2017, edited with Christine Riegel and Erol Yildiz).

### **Mel Gray**

Professor of Social Work at the University of Newcastle, New South Wales, Australia. She has published widely on social work and social development. Most recent publications relevant to this topic include: Gray, M., Agllias, K., & Davies, K. (2014). Social justice feminism. In M. Reisch (ed.). The Routledge International Handbook of Social Justice (pp. 173 – 187). New York: Routledge.

### **Dr. Roger Green**

Director/Senior Research Fellow at the Centre for Community Engagement Research, Goldsmiths University of London. A committed Marxist who is both an academic community researcher and London-based community activist. Originally trained as a youth worker before working as a community social worker and community development worker. He has successfully undertaken over 100 international, UK, and regional community research projects using participatory approaches, including a long-term project with the TATA Institute for Social Sciences, Mumbai, India on caste discrimination, and community development work with an NGO in the Kibera slum in Nairobi, Kenya. Author of numerous academic and community publications.

### **Dr. Jyrki Konkka**

Principal lecturer at Helsinki Metropolia University of Applied Sciences, Helsinki, Finland. Other affiliations are: Chair, Board of Due Process of Helsinki Metropolia University of Applied Sciences; Docent (Adjunct Professor) of Social and Moral Philosophy, University of Helsinki.

### **Faezeh Manteghi**

PhD candidate in Criminal Law and Criminology at the University of Tehran. She received a Masters of Criminal Law and Criminology from the University of Tehran and her professional activities include: Attorney at the Iranian Central Bar Association, researcher at the Center of Iranian Judiciary, and the Institute of Criminal Law and Criminology Faculty of Law and Political Science at the University of Tehran.

**Dr. James I. Martin**

Associate Dean for Academic Affairs and Director of the MSW Program at the NYU Silver School of Social Work, where he has taught most of the required practice and research courses and currently teaches the elective course Contemporary GLBT Issues. He is recognized internationally as a leader in social work theory, research, practice and policy relating to LGBTQ populations. His areas of expertise include the history and construction of LGBTQ identities; social and economic justice issues; and health and mental health disparities among LGBTQ populations. In addition to writing many journal articles and book chapters on a variety of LGBTQ issues, he is co-editor of the Handbook of Research with Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, and Transgender Populations (Routledge, 2009), founder and co-chair of the Caucus of LGBT Faculty and Students in Social Work, an international organization of current and future social work scholars.

**Didier Reynaert, PhD**

Lecturer and Program Coordinator of Social Work Theory for the Master of Social Work of the University of Applied Sciences of Arnhem and Nijmegen (HAN, the Netherlands) and lecturer in Social Work at the University College Ghent (Belgium), where he is part of the research group on Social Work and Human Rights of the Department of Social Work and participates in the Centre of Expertise E-QUAL on Quality of Life. Furthermore, he is guest lecturer at Odisee University College Brussels, where he teaches children's rights. His main expertise lies in the field of social work theory, children's rights studies, human rights, social justice, poverty and community development. He has published extensively in national and international (peer review) journals.

**Andreas Schauder**

Professor at the School of Social Work at the University of Applied Sciences and Arts Northwestern Switzerland. He is International coordinator and lecturer in Social Work.

**Nabeela Talib**

Is doing an MA in Social Work at Oxford Brookes University and holds a BA in Sociology from the University of Warwick. She has volunteered in different areas to support asylum seekers.

**Dr. Nina Thieme**

Has been visiting professor in social work at the Department of Social Work and Social Welfare at the University of Kassel, Germany since 2016. She studied educational science at the University of Bielefeld and completed her PhD. in 2011, analysing categorising work of professionals in child and youth welfare services as a member of the DFG graduate program Youth Welfare and Social Services in Transition. From 2011 to 2015, she was principal investigator of a qualitative study on educational justice in all-day schools (BiRbi-Pro, [www.birbi-pro.uni-hannover.de/](http://www.birbi-pro.uni-hannover.de/)) funded by the BMBF. Her fields of work and interest are professionalism in child and youth welfare and social work, social and educational (in)justice, and qualitative research methods and methodologies.

**Dr. Katrin Toens**

Professor of Political Sciences in the department of Social Work at the Protestant University of Applied Sciences in Freiburg. She wrote her doctoral thesis on theories of justice and its application to welfare policy in Germany and the United States. After finishing her doctoral degree at the Leibniz University of Hanover she worked as a senior researcher and assistant professor at the Westfälische Wilhelms-University of Muenster and at the University of Hamburg. She coordinates the Masters in social work. Her teaching and research focuses on policy analysis, the politics of interest representation in social politics and social work, and more recently, migration and refugee politics. For more information:

[www.eh-freiburg.de/hochschule/personenverzeichnis/prof-dr-katrin-toens/67](http://www.eh-freiburg.de/hochschule/personenverzeichnis/prof-dr-katrin-toens/67)

## Student Assessment

Students are assessed for their critical reflection skills and their ability to assimilate and reflect on specific aspects of the knowledge acquired during the Summer School.

Assessment is based on a group poster that elaborates on the selected content of one of the workshops and the various lectures. Posters are presented on the final day of the workshop.

Workshop leaders will provide students with ideas and suggestions for devising their posters.

### Assessment Criteria for Posters

- **Formal**  
Structure, clarity, use of visual elements in relation to text, aesthetic appeal.
- **Content**  
Quantity and quality of the above aspects. Quality refers to the logical, concise, and consolidated design of information, that is, argumentation.
- **Reflection**  
Succinct presentation of the topics and issues discussed in the workshops and lectures.

### Grades

Pass/fail

## Maps and Directions

### University of Basel «Kollegienhaus»



**1** Kollegienhaus, University of Basel  
Petersplatz 1

**A** Take Bus BVB 30 from Basel SBB Station  
**B** Alight at Basel Spalentor, proceed on foot to Petersplatz 1

The 2017 Summer School of the FHNW School of Social Work will be held in the Kollegienhaus (College Building) of the University of Basel, Petersplatz 1.

University of Applied Sciences and Arts  
Northwestern Switzerland FHNW  
School of Social Work  
Centre for Social Work Studies  
Scientific Support Centre: International Office

### **Summer School 2017**

Social Justice: A Normative  
Foundation for Social Work?

June 6<sup>th</sup> – 9<sup>th</sup>, 2017

University of Basel «Kollegienhaus», Petersplatz 1

- BA Social Work
- MA Social Work with a special emphasis on Social Innovation
- Students of the Hogeschool van Amsterdam (NL)
- Students of the Hogeschool van Arnhem en Nijmegen (NL)

### **Organisation**

Thomas Geisen  
Andreas Schauder

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